

Message Text

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R 131829Z JAN 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

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SUBJECT: PLOVDIV 76

REF: A) SOFIA 2756 B) USIA 28618

1) BEWT HAS BEEN IN CONTINUAL CONSULTATION WITH USIA ON PLOVDIV 76. BOTH AGREE THAT DOME ALONE WILL PROVIDE SUFFICIENT SPACE FOR FIRST CLASS COMMERCIAL EXHIBITION, INCLUDING OFFICE, LOUNGE, AND STORAGE FACILITIES. WILL ATTEMPT PROVIDE TOILET FACILITIES WITHIN DOME AS FEASIBLE. FURTHERMORE, NEITHER BEWT NOR USIA HAS FUNDS TO RENT PAVILION 24 GIVEN DEMANDS ON AVAILABLE FUNDS ARISING FROM EVENTS ELSEWHERE IN EASTERN EUROPE.

2) RECRUITING OF COMMERCIAL EXHIBITORS FOR PLOVDIV 76 GOING SLOWLY IN PART BECAUSE OF PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED BY EXHIBITORS IN PREVIOUS YEARS. PROBLEMS MENTIONED IN PARTICIPANTS' REPORTS, LETTERS, AND PHONE CALLS INCLUDE FOLLOWING: (A) NEED TO KNOW NAME AND LOCATION OF HOTEL BEFORE ARRIVING IN PLOVDIV, PREFERABLY BEFORE ARRIVING IN BULGARIA; (B) HOTELS NOT CONVENIENTLY LOCATED. (LOCATION AND INCOMPLETE DESCRIPTION WERE MAIN FACTORS CITED IN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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COMPLAINTS OF "INADEQUATE" HOTEL SPACE.); (C) FEELING THAT

AMERICANS WERE CHARGED ABOUT DOUBLE WHAT OTHER NATIONALS WERE CHARGED FOR LODGING; (D) INABILITY TO BRING BUSES ONTO FAIRGROUNDS; (E) FACT THAT AMERICANS COULD LEAVE ONLY BY FRONT GATE OF FAIRGROUNDS WHEREAS OTHER NATIONALITIES WERE LEAVING BY NEARBY EXIT; (E) SOME COMPANY REPRESENTATIVES WHO WERE IN NEARBY HOTELS WERE BUMPED TO OTHERS MILES AWAY.

3) AS ONE PARTICIPANT SAID, "SOME OF THESE ARE MINOR PROBLEMS, BUT IT DOES SHOW WHO YOUR FRIENDS ARE". HOWEVER, THESE PROBLEMS DO RANKLE AND DO NOT ENCOURAGE BUSINESSMEN TO CONSIDER A MARKET THAT OFFERS LESS COMMERCIAL POTENTIAL THAN MANY OTHERS DO.

4) EMBASSY MIGHT CONSIDER APPROACHING APPROPRIATE, HIGH-LEVEL BULGARIAN OFFICIALS ON PROBLEMS IN PARA (2), POINTING OUT THAT IF BULGARIANS ARE SERIOUS IN IMPROVING COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH UNITED STATES AND IN HAVING AMERICANS EXHIBIT AT PLOVDIV, EITHER UNDER USG AUSPICES OR ON THEIR OWN, THESE PROBLEMS SHOULD BE RESOLVED.

5) BEWT WILL APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S COOPERATION AND EARLIEST ADVICE FOR GUIDANCE IN DECIDING FURTHER ACTION/RECRUITMENT FOR PLOVDIV '76. KISSINGER

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